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(*Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, Wks. ed. Scott, 15. 353); Swinburne takes it as an evidence of mental decay (*Study of Ben Jonson*, p. 79); on the other hand, Lamb cites from the play "to show the poetical fancy and elegance of mind of the supposed rugged old bard" (*Specimens*, ed. Bohn, p. 276); Symonds, after conceding the preposterousness of the plot, records his opinion "that *The New Inn*, in many important respects, is one of Jonson's best comedies" (*Ben Jonson*, p. 177); and Castelain, (*Ben Jonson, L'Homme et l'Œuvre*, Paris, 1907, p. 428), after calling attention to the faults of the play, says "n'y trouvera-t-on rien à louer? Il reste le style; et si c'est un mérite secondaire et même dangereux pour une comédie, d'être bien écrite, il faut rendre cette justice à Jonson que *la Nouvelle Auberge* est peut-être le mieux écrite de ses comédies."

Tennant rightly traces the failure of *The New Inn*, not to collapse of the author's powers, but to the application of Jonson's satiric humor-comedy idea to romantic material. It is no "lusus naturæ" but a natural development of the poet's characteristic method of writing. Tennant finds no evidence that Jonson's personal enemies had anything to do with the failure, nor does he find anything to justify Gifford's assertion—followed by Ward (*Eng. Dram. Lit.*), and Herford (*D. N. B.*)—that the play was not heard to the end.

Besides noting the parallel episode in the *Widow*, Dr. Tennant traces Lovel's speech on love to Plato's *Symposium*, and that on valor to Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*. For the machinery of the court of love, before which Lovel makes his speeches, the *Arrêts d'Amours* of Martial d'Auvergne is offered as a probable source.

Tennant thinks that the passages common to *The New Inn* and Fletcher's *Love's Pilgrimage* were probably adapted from Jonson's play to the other—by whom he does not suggest. Certain apparently useless changes of phrase would be more explicable if we were to assume that the adaptation was made, not from the 1631 text, but from the original players' copy, whose text may have been revised by Jonson before publication. Of course existing evidence justifies nothing more definite than a hypothesis.

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## FRENCH LIBRARIES.

EUGÈNE MOREL, *Bibliothèques: Essai sur le développement des bibliothèques publiques et de la librairie dans les deux mondes*. Paris: Mercure de France, 16 Rue de Condé, 1908-1909. 2 vols. 8vo., xiv, 390; iv and 475 pp.

Written in an attractive, popular style, these two volumes set forth the decadence of France in library matters and point out the superiority of the German, English and American library systems. The author himself deeply deplores this state of affairs and endeavors to suggest a variety of remedies, the sum and substance of which is that the French libraries should be made more popular, and not be almost exclusively devoted to the interests of scholars.

While referring more or less incidentally to libraries in many parts of the world, as well as in the provinces and in Paris itself, the author's chief concern is the Bibliothèque Nationale. While admitting that it is now the greatest library in the world, he thinks that this supremacy is not destined to last long because of the rapid strides that the great libraries of other countries are making, and because of the absurd system under which the Parisian library is managed.

What seems to have stirred the author's wrath most of all is the catalogue of printed books which the Bibliothèque Nationale is now issuing. He claims that the librarians are spending valuable time and money on trivialities, while neglecting the really important problems before them; that the rate of progress is so slow that the accessions are actually coming in faster than the catalogue incorporates them; that in any case only about half of the contents of the library are supposed to be described in the catalogue; and finally, that a subject catalogue is needed, and not an author catalogue such as is now being published by the French government.

He thinks furthermore that the vital interests of the French nation are being neglected, that no serious effort is made to acquire new and important books, that the great mass of books already in the library are practically inaccessible, and that the general public is all but excluded from the reading-rooms.

In Mediæval, Renaissance, and more modern times France as a whole was well supplied with libraries; but about the year 1850 a period of decadence set in. The Second Empire cut down the credits, destroyed all initiative, turned the libraries over to the archæologists and shut out the general public. The Republic which followed continued the same general policy, and matters have gone from bad to worse.

The libraries in the provinces lead a somnolent existence. Centralization carried to its extreme limit has stifled all intellectual life by the endless red tape of officialdom. One thing alone is done thoroughly—the manuscripts, incunabula and other old and rare books are being catalogued minutely, and the catalogues are being published by the government.

M. Morel passes over the libraries of Italy with a few general remarks devoted especially to Rome and Florence. The libraries of Spain and Portugal receive even less consideration at his hands, while the other European countries aside from England and Germany are treated in the same fashion. These latter countries and the United States come in for a larger share of his attention, America being styled the Land of Libraries. The following expression of the author's opinion in regard to the metropolis of the Western World is of interest, though perhaps not wholly justified: "New-York vient de terminer les constructions géantes qui lui assurent le premier rang parmi les greniers intellectuels des capitales du monde." The libraries of Boston and Washington also fill him with wonder at the material progress made in the past few decades.

While M. Morel's two large volumes contain a host of interesting comments and suggestions in regard to library management, the reader cannot help but feel that the work was on the whole rather hastily written and the subject-matter not fully digested by the author in his hurry. Though doubtless familiar enough with the French libraries from the standpoint of a French journalist who has made use of their facilities for many years, yet it seems evident that in speaking of the libraries of other countries the author has often failed to appreciate the fundamental difference in the conditions under which they have grown up.

So, too, the author does not seem to fully

appreciate the difficulties with which the librarians of any large public library have to contend, and hence he is doubtless somewhat unfair in his criticism of them. While his book is perhaps not a valuable work of reference on libraries and library management, yet it is so full of ideas and so apt in spicy comment that it may safely be recommended as interesting reading for all persons having to do with masses of books as found in a large library.

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*Beowulf. Mit ausführlichem Glossar herausgegeben von Moritz Heyne. Achte Auflage, besorgt von LEVIN LUDWIG SCHÜCKING. Paderborn, Schöningh, 1908.*

It is a pleasure to record the satisfaction of using an edition of *Beowulf* on the whole so admirable as this. While the title-page announces it as a revision of the familiar Heyne text, it is almost as truly an independent piece of work as though Dr. Schücking had started an edition of his own. The labors of Socin had proved totally inadequate to keeping the book up to date, and much that was useless and inconvenient had been allowed to stand. Conservatism which persistently lags behind the times deserves a harsher name. The seventh Heyne-Socin edition was very unsatisfactory indeed. Sweeping changes were necessary, and they have here been faithfully carried out. The antiquated and confusing method of marking quantities both by the circumflex and the acute accent has been given up, and the macron substituted. The printing of *œ* and *æ* as *ä* and *æ* has been abandoned, and the arrangement of the vocabulary according to vowel-quantity rather than alphabetical sequence discarded. The notes have been thoroughly revised and brought up to date, with due attention to the latest critical conjectures. This alone must have been a difficult and wearisome task. The glossary has been revised, and changes have been made in the index of proper names. Dr. Schücking has had the courage to discontinue the old